

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
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INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 3466

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR SHUM CI
SUBJECT: GOC FOREIGN MINISTER ON USG RELATIONS WITH SOUTHERN CONE

1. SUMMARY: DURING AN APRIL 25 MEETING WITH THE
AMBASSADOR, GOC FOREIGN MINISTER CARVAJAL EXPRESSED THE
BELIEF THAT THE USG HAD GONE SO FAR IN ITS RESTRICTIONS
AND SANCTIONS AGAINST CHILE THAT LITTLE U.S.
LEVERAGE REMAINED. HE WAS INCLINED TO BELIEVE IT WOULD
BE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE (PRESENT) GOC TO DO
ANYTHING WHICH WOULD RESULT IN REGAINING U.S. FAVOR.
URGING FURTHER HUMAN RIGHTS IMPROVEMENTS, THE
AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED THAT THE GOC AVOID ACTIONS
BASED ON SUCH AN EVALUATION, PENDING AS SPECIFIC EXPRESSION
OF U.S. POLICY TOWARD CHILE AND SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES
BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. END SUMMARY.

2. THE SUBJECT AROSE WHEN THE AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO
THE STATEMENT ABOUT U.S. RELATIONS WITH SOUTHERN CONE
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COUNTRIES MADE BY AIR FORCE CINC/JUNTA MEMBER GENERAL
LEIGH IN ARGENTINA. ACCORDING TO WIRE SERVICE REPORTS
AND BUENOS AIRES 3031, LEIGH SUGGESTED THE POSSIBILITY
OF A NEW LOOK AT THE RIO TREATY (TIAR) UNLESS U.S. POLICY
TOWARD LATIN AMERICAN CHANGED. ON HIS RETURN TO SANTIAGO,
HE PLAYED DOWN HIS REMARKS SOMEWHAT.

3. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT TAMPERING WITH THE TREATY WOULD SERVE THE INTEREST OF ANY PARTY. HE NOTED THAT SO FAR THE NEW U.S. ADMINISTRATION HAD GIVEN NO SPECIFIC INDICATION OF ITS FUTURE POSTURE TOWARD CHILE, OR INDEED OF ITS STANCE TOWARD THE SOUTHERN CONE. HE SUGGESTED THAT IT WOULD BE WISE FOR THESE COUNTRIES TO REMAIN CALM AND TO HOLD THEIR DECISIONS ON MATTERS INVOLVING RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. IN ABEYANCE FOR THE TIME BEING.

4. CARVAJAL ASSERTED THAT THE GOC HAD STUDIED WITH AMBASSADOR CAUAS AND GOVERNMENT LAWYERS THE U.S. LEGISLATIVE RESTRICTIONS ON MILITARY COOPERATION WITH CHILE. THEIR CONCLUSION WAS THAT THERE ARE NO LOOPHOLES; CHILE CANNOT BUY OR RECEIVE ANYTHING. MOREOVER, THE EXCLUSION IS PERMANENT; THERE IS NO DISCRETION, OR PROVISION FOR REVIEW OR FOR PRESIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATION. IN THIS AND OTHER FIELDS, THE U.S. HAD GONE VERY FAR TOWARD EXHAUSTING THE LEVERAGE IT COULD USE AGAINST CHILE. THUS, CARVAJAL CONCLUDED, THE UTILITY OF BILATERAL DIALOGUE IS DUBIOUS.

5. THE AMBASSADOR REMARKED THAT IF DEVELOPMENTS IN CHILE WARRANTED IT, THE PRESIDENT COULD SEEK REMOVAL OF EXISTING RESTRICTIONS. RECENT HUMAN RIGHTS TRENDS IN CHILE HAD BEEN ENCOURAGING, AND WE HOPED THEY COULD BE EXTENDED. CARVAJAL DOUBTED THAT A CONGRESSIONAL MAJORITY COULD BE FOUND TO OVERRIDE THE FLAT PROVISIONS OF THE SECURITY ASSISTANCE ACT. SHOULD
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THE HARKIN AMENDMENT PRINCIPLE BE EXTENDED TO ALL THE IF IT'S THE SITUATION WOULD BE EVEN WORSE.

6. WARNING TO HIS THEME, CARVAJAL ASKED RHETORICALLY IF THERE WERE NO WAY FOR THE USG TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES WERE DEFENDING THEMSELVES AGAINST TERRORISM FOMENTED BY SOVIET COMMUNISM AND BACKED BY SOVIET MONEY AND PROPAGANDA. THE SOUTHERN CONE COUNTRIES WERE THE UNITED STATES' NATURAL ALLIES -- THE ENEMIES OF THE U.S.' ENEMIES. AND THE U.S. WAS MISTAKEN IF IT THOUGHT THAT OVERTURNING THE SOUTHERN CONE GOVERNMENTS WOULD RESULT IN REPLACING THEM WITH EOMPLIANT COUNTRIES WITH NO HUMAN RIGHTS PROBLEMS.

7. THE AMBASSADOR STATED THAT ONE REASON FOR THE DIFFERENCE IN THE RESPECTIVE VIEWS OF THE TWO COUNTRIES REGARDING HUMAN RIGHTS WAS ILLUSTRATED IN CARVAJAL'S REMARKS. WHILE RECOGNIZING THE POTENTIAL ELEMENTS OF DANGER ARISING FROM THE STRATEGY AND IDEOLOGY OF COMMUNIST COUNTRIES,

THE USG NO LONGER CONSIDERED THESE TO BE THE EXCLUSIVE, OR PERHAPS EVEN THE PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS OF CONCERN ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE. A MUCH BROADER RANGE OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS HAD TO BE CONSIDERED AT THE SAME TIME. THE USG CONCERN FOR VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS WAS ONE OF THESE FACTORS.

8. THE U.S. DID NOT DISREGARD OR UNDERRATE THE PROBLEM OF TERRORISM. BUT IN THIS REGARD, THE SITUATION IN CHILE SEEMED TO US TO DIFFER RADICALLY FROM THAT IN ARGENTINA. TERRORISTS HAD BEEN UNABLE TO ESTABLISH A GUERRILLA RESISTANCE OR TO CONDUCT WIDESPREAD DESTRUCTIVE ACTION IN CHILE SINCE THE EARLIEST DAYS OF THE JUNTA. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT FOR U.S. OPINION TO UNDERSTAND WHY IT WAS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN SUCH DRACONIC EMERGENCY MEASURES INDEFINITELY IN CHILE. IF THE RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN CONFIDENTIAL

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INDIVIDUAL HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN CHILE SHOULD CONTINUE, U.S. OPINION WOULD EVENTUALLY RECOGNIZE THAT IMPROVEMENT. CARVAJAL WAS SKEPTICAL OF THIS POSSIBILITY.

9. COMMENT: IN RECENT MEETINGS WITH THE AMBASSADOR, CARVAJAL HAS SEEMED TO BE INCREASINGLY DOUBTFUL THAT, WHATEVER THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT DID, THE U.S. WOULD RESPOND ACCORDINGLY. THIS WAS THE STRONGEST STATEMENT ALONG THESE LINES WE HAVE HEARD FROM HIM. I REMAIN CONVINCED, HOWEVER, THAT THERE IS STILL SOME OPPORTUNITY FOR A CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE LOOKING TOWARD FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN THE CHILEAN HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION. WE SHALL CONTINUE TO COUNSEL THE CHILEANS IN THIS SENSE.
POPPER

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